

Introduction

*saṅgītaṃ sāhityaṃ ca sarasvatyāḥ stanadvayam /
ekam āpāta-madhuram anyad ālocanāmṛtam //*

Music and poetry:
The Goddess of arts has two breasts.
One is delicious at first tasting.
The other becomes so
when you chew on it.¹

The multifarious relations between the sound and the word were a subject of concern for Indian authors starting from the Vedic period. It was the *Samaveda* and its creators that noticed the emotional value of the sound and the impact of euphonic combinations on the audience. The interactions of music and text are clearly visible in theatrical traditions although there are also some other meeting points of literature and Indian arts.

Diversity and interdisciplinary breadth were the chief criteria while collecting the articles for the present volume. Some of them were presented during the International Seminar *The Word and the Sound. Fringes of Indian Music and Literature*, organised in 2007 by the Department of Indian Studies, Institute of Oriental Philology, Jagiellonian University in cooperation with the Academy of Music in Kraków and the Committee of Oriental Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences, Cracow Branch. The other articles introduce painting and sculpture and their complex links with Indian literature.

¹ *A Poem at the Right Moment. Remembered Verses from Premodern South India*, collected and translated by Velcheru Narayana Rao and David Shulman, p. 61.

The collected articles have been arranged subject-wise. Those contained in the first section deal with Indian inspirations present in Western music and the librettos of operas.

Emilio Ghezzi discusses the influence of Indian music on Gustav Theodor Holst's (1874-1934) operas and a series of his vocal works. Interestingly enough the English composer never had a direct experience with Indian music. It was his theoretical knowledge which enabled him to "translate" some features characteristic of Indian music, as for instance modality and irregular rhythms, into his own musical language.

As is well known Holst drew his inspiration not only from Indian music but also from Indian literature. The next article authored by Gabriella Ferrero Olivero and Daniela Rossella is devoted to Holst's opera based on the *Rāmāyaṇa*. The opera entitled *Sita* has never been performed and the libretto has never been published, nevertheless the manuscript is worth studying as it shows the composer's attitude to the Sanskrit prototype. The story of Rāma and Sītā as told by Gustav Holst differs very much from Vālmīki's narration. In fact the title of the opera is fully justified as it is a story about Sītā's courage, rectitude and determination and her conflict with Śūrpaṇakhā. It turns out that Sītā is the central personage, the heroine of the narration. Instead of Rāma's life and adventures, i.e. *Rāmāyaṇa*, we are dealing with the description of Sītā's goings, i.e. *Sītāyaṇa*, in Olivero and Rossella's words.

The figure of Sītā was also an inspiration for Jan Kasprowicz (1860-1926), a poet, playwright, literary critic and translator belonging to the Young Poland literary movement. His *Sita. Indyjski hymn miłości* (*Sita. The Indian Hymn of Love*) – the theme of the next article – was a libretto of a musical drama in three acts. The work was dedicated to an amateur composer, Władysław Lubomirski, who was supposed to compose music to Kasprowicz's libretto but never did. The *Sita* was finally published in Poznań in 1917. Kasprowicz treats the subject matter of the *Rāmāyaṇa* quite freely using it to express his own feelings, desires, hopes and doubts.

The article by Iwona Milewska presents a man of many skills and potential, Konstanty Regamey (1907-1982): an orientalist, composer, art critic and theoretician of art, who joined the ancient hymns and poems of Orient with his own modern music.

Katarzyna Subocz opens her article entitled "The emotional value of a sound according to Sanskrit treatises on the theory of literature" with the discussion of Bharata's concepts of the sound value concerning production and representation of *rasas* – sentiments. The choice of the metre and mode of recitation as well as the selection of certain sounds were responsible for the creation of the desired *rasa*. Then Katarzyna Subocz discusses the approach of post-Bharatian theorists of literature, who were dealing with different aspects of a sound as productive in the process of creating literary composition. Their opinions on phonetic features of literary compositions are to be found in statements devoted to certain *guṇas* (qualities) and *alamkāras* (poetical figures), which are again connected with sentiments. As the author of the article concludes, the concepts developed by ancient Indian theoreticians "were meant to convey the theory of unity of sentiments with sound. All of them were, in the opinion of ancient Indians, crucial for issuing something that we can call the emotional melody of a text. Texts based on these instructions were not only agreeable to the ear, but also pleasing to different tastes".

Anna Nitecka's article is devoted to the place of music among aesthetic problems taken up and discussed by Abhinavagupta in his *oeuvre*. Abhinavagupta frequently refers to music, which played an important role in the rituals of the tantric tradition Trika, however his interest was not restricted to its ritual function only. In his writings Abhinavagupta addresses some musicological issues, such as types of musical instruments, modes of playing various instruments, notes (*svara*), scales (*grāma*), time-measure (*tala*), tempo (*laya*) and the classification of songs. He also uses the concept of Vāc (the Speech or the Sound) as elaborated in Trika Śaivism to explain the impact of music on listeners. According to Abhinavagupta the performative arts

constitute one of the most powerful means to develop individual consciousness.

The articles by Katarzyna Subocz and Anna Nitecka somehow prepare grounds for the next section to come in the volume, the section which consists of three articles dealing with the theory of drama and the place of music in the stage production of a play.

Maria Krzysztof Byrski addresses the question of four styles or the types of theatrical practice (*vr̥ttis*) as explained in the first Indian treatise on dramaturgy preserved up to now, namely the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. He points to the links between the theatre and myth. In the case of theatrical performance the theory of communication cannot be neglected. In Byrski's opinion communication in Indian art and literature spreads between two poles: rationality and emotionality. The attitude adopted by the author results in the all-embracing definition of the *vr̥tti* and its place in the production of a play: "No doubt *vr̥tti* is a sort of activity that is supposed to convey definite information about the nature of what actually happens on the stage to those who witness it. Thus the natural order is reverted. In actual life practice, the inner impulse to express something makes us adopt a particular demeanour. In theatre to the contrary, an actor is supposed to know which type of demeanour will evoke in a spectator the required emotional response. Consequently he will resort to the one which will make the audience feel precisely what an actor wishes them to feel. This is the reason why it is so important to determine the particular demeanour for each scene of a theatrical performance in order to convey its message to the audience properly and evoke in them the required emotional response".

Klara Gönc Moacanin also refers to the *Nāṭyaśāstra* while dealing with the *antaryavanikā*, which is the musical part of the *pūrvarāṅga*, i.e. the preliminaries conducted before the commencement of the performance itself, including prayers or rituals. The author presents the divisions of *antaryavanikā* and gives her hypothesis concerning its links with the drama. The article makes the reader aware of the difficulties connected with the interpretation of

the *Nāṭyaśāstra* as well as the need of further investigation, the close analysis of the text and the required interdisciplinary approach to the problems.

Bożena Śliwczyńska analyses the technique of *vācikābhñaya* in the *Kūṭiyāṭṭam* theatre of Kerala. The term encompasses both the expression through speech as well as the employment of musical instruments. The *Kūṭiyāṭṭam* is the oldest Indian theatrical tradition preserved up to now, that is why studying it can shed light on many aspects of staging plays in ancient India, although one has to take into account the influences of local traditions.

The last part of the volume, consisting of three articles, is dedicated to the links between painting or sculpture and Indian literature.

The article by Dorota Kamińska shows intricate relations which exist in the case of *rāgamālā* genre, where three kinds of art: music, poetry and painting are intermingled into one unparalleled masterpiece.

The article entitled “*Kirātārjunīya* in South India: the story as depicted in literature and art with a special reference to the Lepakshi temple” by the author of the Introduction deals with the *Kirāta* episode presented on the reliefs in the Lepakshi temple. The thread of narration as observed on the reliefs has some traits similar to the *Kirātārjunīya* of Bhāravi, sometimes it follows the *Mahābhārata*, and what is extremely interesting it betrays indebtedness to the local versions of the story of Arjuna and the Hunter. As John Brockington stated in his article “Visual Epics”, the representations in relief sculptures and friezes of the two Sanskrit epics, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata*, are important testimony to the evolution of the texts and “...the scenes chosen for depiction can reveal which episodes were most favoured, either by the artists or by their patrons; in other words they can tell us something about the reception of the epics generally”².

² J. Brockington, “Visual Epics”, [in:] *Indian Epic Traditions – Past and Present. Papers presented at the 16th European Conference on Modern South*

The volume closes with a precious contribution of Anna Ślaczka containing a chapter on the iconography of Hindu deities present in the *Devyāmata* edited for the first time. The introduction, English summary of the contents and notes are provided to the edition of the Sanskrit text.

I would like to warmly thank all the contributors to the volume. I am also grateful to Prof. Marzenna Czerniak-Drożdżowicz and Prof. Piotr Balcerowicz, who kindly agreed to read the articles and review the volume for the publisher.

It is hoped that the present volume will stimulate the similar collaborative efforts showing the different dimensions and ties bounding Indian fine arts.



The present volume and the Seminar *The Word and the Sound. Fringes of Indian Music and Literature*, which gave an inspiration to it, could not come into existence without the help of the authorities of the Jagiellonian University, the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, the Embassy of the Republic of India in Warsaw and the Istituto Italiano di Cultura in Kraków. The fruitful cooperation with the Academy of Music in Kraków should be also mentioned here. It was Professor of the Academy of Music, Jan Pilch, the originator of the *International Percussion Festival* "Sources & Inspirations", who saw the chance to encompass the scholarly seminar on Indian music and literature within the programme of the 5th Festival. In such a way the efforts of the team of Seminar organizers belonging to the

Department of Indian Studies at the Jagiellonian University were supported and the Festival audience was offered new possibilities, including two performances of the *Kūṭiyāṭṭam* theatre. Three artists came from Kerala Kalamandalam, Cheruthuruthi, India. The role of Subhadrā was played by German indologist from Tübingen, Dr. Heike Moser, who has not only done research on *Kūṭiyāṭṭam* but also, after studying the art of *Kūṭiyāṭṭam* in Kerala Kalamandalam, performs and takes part in workshops presenting intricacies of this particular theatrical tradition. The chance to witness the *Kūṭiyāṭṭam* performances for the first time in Kraków could not have materialised were it not for the generous help of Mr. Jay Singh (Weco Travel, Warsaw) and the Museum Galicia, Kraków. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all who made the events possible.

Lidia Sudyka